THE LEADING

Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services

A Message from Our Director



I am proud to release the final progress report for the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) Strategic Plan, "The Leading Edge, 2010-2013." It marks the closure of our first multiyear effort to carry-out Department-wide priorities in a transparent way, involving all employees. Together, we showed that a large and complex organization like ours can work together in new ways to achieve our goals.

It took much work to get to this point and I want to thank all of you for your tireless commitment to achieving excellence. Your initial recommendations for over 1000 potential objectives laid the foundation for the plan. We started 2010 with 110 Objectives. A few were added, a few were dropped, and a handful live on as part of the new Strategic Plan. By the end of 2013, we completed 87 Objectives including the following key accomplishments:

- A 4/40 work schedule for line staff;
- A customer-friendly website to access case information (Your Benefits Now!);
- Redesign of the General Relief Program;
- Full case imaging in all eligibility offices;
- A Customer Service Center for all eligibility offices.

Completion of the **87** objectives has strengthened the integrity of our processes and improved customer service. How do I account for our success? I attribute it to YOU - staff from all corners of DPSS with expertise in different areas working together, and learning from each other to develop innovative services and technologies. This new way of working together has also strengthened our organizational culture by challenging us to optimize our communication methods to share information. In sum, we proved that we can reach new heights of achievement.

Built on our recent success, I am eager to share with you, the Strategic Plan 2014-2016, "Beyond The Leading Edge." Our new Strategic Plan is employee-driven and focused on changing the way we do business. It contains 42 Objectives that are directed at improving our job performance and providing customers with new ways to access our services. I look forward to your active participation in the implementation of our new Strategic Plan.

Sincerely,

Sheryl L. Spiller

GOALI

PROGRAM EXCELLENCE

Deliver the highest quality, effective and individualized services.

Strategy I.1

Service Delivery Systems: Establish clear and concise procedures including measurement and monitoring standards to achieve the highest quality program outcomes.

Objective

- **1.1.1** By June 2011, increase the number of licenses and users of Plain Language software by 400.
 - **COMPLETE**
- **1.1.2** By May 2012, employees who have direct contact with applicants/customers should have completed customer service training.

COMPLETE

- **1.1.3** By September 2010, implement a telephone recertification option for the Food Stamp and CalWORKs Programs.
 - **COMPLETE**
- By September 2012, establish an alternative procedure (e.g., telephone, on-line) through which new customers can call and speak to a DPSS representative to schedule their initial appointment to apply for benefits.

COMPLETE

1.1.5 By June 2010, maintain the Food Stamps Quality Control error rate below 6%.

COMPLETE

1.1.6 By June 2010, reduce the Food Stamp Negative Case Action error rate to 10% or less.

COMPLETE

1.1.7 By June 2010, redesign the General Relief Program to reduce homelessness, increase the number of customers who transition to SSI and increase the number of customers who become employed.

- **I.1.8** By June 2010, improve the Los Angeles County Work Participation Rate (WPR) to meet the federal requirement adjusted by applicable caseload reduction credit.
 - **COMPLETE**

GOAL I PROGRAM EXCELLENCE

Objective

1.1.9 By June 2011, increase outreach to CalWORKs homeless families so that 10% of homeless families each month secure permanent housing.

CONTINUE IN 2014 OUTSIDE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

I.1.10 By June 2010, continue to meet the State performance standards for Medi-Cal application and redetermination processing.

COMPLETE

By August 2010, implement the MEDS Alert Tracking System to reduce line staff time required to process MEDS alerts and help identify systematic opportunities to reduce the number of alerts.

COMPLETE

I.1.12 By June 2013 and ongoing, provide IHSS Line Operations staff with specific training to enhance skills and knowledge of staff in the following areas:

Fraud - To strengthen social work staff's diligence in the prevention and detection of fraud and program abuse and misuse.

Medi-Cal - To increase social work staff's understanding of the Medi-Cal Program's impact on IHSS cases.

Adult Protective Services (APS) - To strengthen social work staff's ability to detect elder and dependent adult abuse.

COMPLETE

I.1.13 By June 2011, establish an approach (e.g., Lean Six Sigma for Government, TEAM) to develop innovative and creative approaches in administration of new and existing programs to be piloted to improve efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery.

CANCELLED

I.1.14 By December 2011, align DPSSTATS measures with the Strategic Plan's objectives and regularly include a report on the Strategic Plan as part of the DPSSTATS meetings.

GOAL I PROGRAM EXCELLENCE

Strategy I.2

Customer Service: Establish a process for obtaining, assessing, and utilizing customer feedback to improve program performance.

Objective

I.2.1 By December 2012, develop a uniform departmental "Customer Service Survey" process for use by Divisions/Bureaus.

COMPLETE

1.2.2 By June 2013, provide an e-mail option for customers to directly contact their eligibility, GAIN and Social Workers.

MERGED INTO AN ESTABLISHED OBJECTIVE IN THE 2014-2016 STRATEGIC PLAN

By October 2010, develop and implement pilots in two district offices by installing courtesy computers for customers' use. Evaluate results for department-wide implementation.

COMPLETE

Strategy I.3

Program Advocacy: Promote the needs of our customers through the use of local, State, and national forums.

- By December 2010, implement a plan to enhance the coordination of State and federal budget/legislative advocacy with community partners, other County departments, and other public agencies.

 COMPLETE
- **1.3.2** By December 2010, implement a plan to strengthen the Department's relationships with members of the County's State and federal Legislative Delegation and their staff.

PROGRAM EXCELLENCE

Strategy I.4

Research & Development: Apply research findings that have the potential to improve services to customers to develop new programs and to evaluate existing programs.

Objective

1.4.1 By June 2013, establish a panel to systematically evaluate pilot programs to determine whether they should be maintained, extended, or terminated.

COMPLETE

1.4.2 By September 2011, develop a systematic procedure for analyzing research findings and determining their applicability to the Department.

COMPLETE

Strategy I.5

Program Integrity: Enhance integrity of all Department-administered programs through use of innovative automation techniques and other advanced program integrity approaches.

- **I.5.1** By April 2011, implement data mining technology to support child care program integrity efforts. **COMPLETE**
- By April 2012, assess the feasibility of using data mining technology to support program integrity efforts in additional programs.

COMPLETE

1.5.3 By June 2010, develop and implement a plan to utilize new State funding to enhance IHSS program integrity.

GOAL II OUTREACH & PARTNERSHIPS

Promote innovative approaches with other service providers, businesses, and advocates.

Strategy II.I

Service Integration/Collaboration: Partner with other County Departments and government agencies to meet the service needs of shared customers.

Objective

II.1.1 By December 2013, establish a baseline evaluation on the status of interdepartmental customer data sharing with CEO and other County departments.

CANCELLED

II.1.2 By December 2013, develop standardized protocols for interdepartmental customer data sharing with CEO and other County departments.

CANCELLED

- **II.1.3** By December 2013, determine the feasibility of new and/or expanded multi-agency programs for:
 - (a) skid row residents;
 - (b) released inmates;
 - (c) juvenile probationers;
 - (d) Veterans; and
 - (e) individuals who cannot leave their homes.

CANCELLED

II.1.4 By June 2011, determine the feasibility of implementing interdepartmental STATS with CEO and other County departments.

GOAL II OUTREACH & PARTNERSHIPS

Strategy II.2 Community-Based Collaborations: Build a network of available community resources to connect customers to needed resources.

Objective

II.2.1

By December 2013, create a job intern classification in County government for GAIN and GROW customers.

CONTINUE IN 2014 OUTSIDE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

11.2.2 By June 2013, provide access to a web-based searchable list of community resources that complement DPSS provided services, including INFO-LINE (211) accessibility to GAIN and eligibility staff.

COMPLETE

II.2.3 By December 2013, coordinate with the VA to provide returning veterans with maximum information on benefit availability during their transition back to civilian life.

COMPLETE

II.2.4 By December 2010, provide an on-line directory of federal, State, and local government agencies, including a description of the programs/services provided by each of the agencies.

COMPLETE

Strategy II.3

Research Collaborations: Foster partnerships with the academic and research communities to develop evidence-based strategies for better program outcomes.

II.3.1 By October 2012, establish a Los Angeles County Collaborative to define mutual research goals and jointly seek funding.

GOAL II OUTREACH & PARTNERSHIPS

Strategy II.4

Public Awareness/Marketing: Expand efforts to inform customers and the general public about the availability of services and programs.

- By January 2013, increase the utilization of public awareness outlets (e.g., alternative media, job fairs, public access TV) to inform the public about DPSS services.
 - **COMPLETE**
- By June 2012, design and implement a QR7 training program for customers to reduce both unnecessary terminations and office traffic and to enhance accuracy.

CONTINUE IN 2014 OUTSIDE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Build the knowledge, skills, and abilities of employees to ensure a highly qualified workforce.

Strategy III.1

DPSS Academy: Redesign the current Academy as the center for aligning employee training and development with departmental plans.

Objective

- By December 2012, develop an assessment of the infrastructure required to offer a multi-tier (i.e., managerial, supervisorial, and technical staff) training and development program.

 COMPLETE
- By April 2012, assign centralized Staff Development Specialists (SDSs) responsibility for development of customized training programs, and the delivery of on-site training for specific district and regional offices. **COMPLETE**
- By September 2012, utilize a Web-based system of self-directed learning modules and tests to improve performance in areas determined to have high error rates (i.e., Income, Resources, and eligibility determination).

 MERGED INTO AN ESTABLISHED OBJECTIVE IN THE 2014-2016 STRATEGIC PLAN
- III.1.4 By December 2012, provide 10% of departmental training courses on-line. **COMBINED WITH OBJECTIVE III.1.3**
- By September 2012, create an evaluation process for determining on-the-job application of training and development programs.

CONTINUE IN 2014 OUTSIDE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

By May 2012, develop a cross-training program for Eligibility Workers to build knowledge and skills for delivery of program services.

Objective III.1.7	By August 2012, develop a periodic seminar series to increase staff knowledge on societal issues (e.g., poverty) that affect our customers. CONTINUE IN 2014 OUTSIDE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN
III.1.8	By November 2010, allow all employees to attend at least one professional development course annually on work time. CANCELLED
III.1.9	By June 2012, ensure that newly appointed ASM/HSA Is begin Manager training within three months of appointment. COMPLETE
III.1.10	By April 2012, develop and implement a departmental clerical/secretarial procedures training regimen, including the use of MS Office applications. COMPLETE
III.1.11	By February 2012, provide two new training modules for managerial and supervisorial staff to enhance skills and knowledge on Strategic Management. CANCELLED
III.1.12	By June 2013, train all public contact staff on conflict resolution techniques. CONTINUE IN 2014 OUTSIDE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN
III.1.13	By September 2011, train management and appropriate supervisory personnel on budget development and budget management. COMPLETE

Objective

- **III.1.14** By August 2012, train all outstationed eligibility staff to process both Food Stamps and Medi-Cal applications. **COMPLETE**
- By March 2012, implement the use of volunteer Career Counselors and provide the necessary training and resources for them to assist employees in assessing and planning their career options.

 COMPLETE
- By June 2013, develop and pilot a process for staff to provide feedback to their managers with the goal of enhancing the skills of the managers.

 COMPLETE

Strategy III.2

Mentorship Program: Expand the current mentorship program.

- By June 2013, expand the Managerial Mentor-Mentee program department-wide. (Reworded 5/22/2012) **COMPLETE**
- III.2.2 By June 2012, develop a mentor-mentee formal training program. **COMBINED WITH OBJECTIVE III.2.1**

Strategy III.3

Workforce Planning: Establish a formal talent management program for ensuring that managerial positions have prepared successors.

Objective

By June 2013, develop a plan to systematically rotate ASM/HSA Is over a specified time period to broaden skills and knowledge with the exception of technical staff.

CANCELLED

By December 2011, evaluate the feasibility of systematically rotating non-managerial staff with over 5 years of service on the same assignments, with the exception of technical staff.

CANCELLED

Strategy III.4

Workforce Health and Safety: Minimize the Department's liability, workers' compensation exposures and cost of risk by promoting health and safety programs for all employees.

- By November 2011, develop and implement a risk management strategy.

 COMBINED WITH OBJECTIVE III.4.2
- By September 2012, achieve a 3% cost reduction in the Department's workers' compensation liability by developing and implementing a Risk Exposure Cost Avoidance Plan (RECAP).

- By June 2012, enhance the Department's Return-To-Work program by successfully reducing the number of employees on Leave of Absence (LOA) by 3%.

 COMPLETE
- By March 2011, increase by 10% the number of employees participating in the Department's Wellness Program. **COMPLETE**

ORGANIZATIONAL OPERATIONS & SYSTEMS

All components of our organization operate as a unified system.

Strategy IV.1

Design & Governance: Re-engineer the Department's organizational design and decision making processes to reflect changes in service demands and technologies.

Objective

- **IV.1.1** By August 2011, establish a pilot 4/40 work schedule for line staff. **COMPLETE**
- **IV.1.2** By June 2013, integrate operations that handle inquiries and complaints in a centralized location. **COMPLETE**
- **IV.1.3** By June 2013, implement a fully searchable electronic communication system for all program intructions and information.

CONTINUE IN 2014 OUTSIDE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

- **IV.1.4** By June 2013, implement full case imaging in all offices that allows:
 - 1. Scanning documents that are not generated by LEADER;
 - 2. Scanning and viewing of WFP&I and ASH documents;
 - 3. Improving automation for eligibility and WTW processes; and
 - 4. Providing Eligibility and GAIN Supervisors access to the CAST system to view QR7s and other case documents.

COMPLETE

IV.1.5 By January 2013, assess the feasibility of full case imaging in IHSS and GAIN. **COMPLETE**

IV.1.11

COMPLETE

ORGANIZATIONAL **OPERATIONS & SYSTEMS**

By June 2013, develop lobby-flow steps intended to expedite processing and increase efficiency. Among the

Objective IV.1.6	By December 2011, establish alternative methods, (e.g., telephone and on-line) to a face-to-face interview, except when a face-to-face interview is mandated by law. COMPLETE
IV.1.7	By June 2013, create a new Operations Handbook. CONTINUE IN 2014 OUTSIDE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN
IV.1.8	By June 2013, re-engineer/reconfigure district offices in conjunction with the department-wide expansion of Customer Service Center, including the use of space, technology, and human resources. COMBINED WITH OBJECTIVE V.7.4
IV.1.9	By June 2012, develop a Departmental Efficiencies Plan that includes the establishment of an Efficiencies Committee to solicit, review, and implement recommendations for cost savings ideas approved by the Department Director. COMPLETE
IV.1.10	By December 2013, identify ways to receive QR7s other than hard copies mailed or delivered to offices. COMPLETE

steps, include an automated lobby check-in system and signage for participants.

of

ORGANIZATIONAL OPERATIONS & SYSTEMS

Strategy IV.2

Fiscal Dependability: Re-engineer our financial processes to ensure on-going support for strategic budget priorities.

Objective

- **IV.2.1** By December 2011, develop protocols to maximize line management input into the budget process. **COMPLETE**
- **IV.2.2** By December 2011, utilize 98% of State allocations for CalWORKs, Food Stamps, IHSS and Medi-Cal and increase federal revenue for General Relief services. **COMPLETE**
- IV.2.3 By December 2012, in collaboration with the Auditor-Controller and Chief Executive Office, reconfigure the Department's Fiscal Management Branch to enhance efficiency and support to district-level cashiering operations.

 COMPLETE
- IV.2.4 By September 2012, in collaboration with the Auditor-Controller provide ICCP-related training to DPSS managers to enhance fiscal monitoring and responsibility throughout the Department.

 COMPLETE

Strategy IV.3

Contracting Reliability: Introduce best practices that ensure both the timely development and subsequent monitoring of contracts.

IV.3.1 By September 2011, implement the approved plan to centralize contracts and financial MOUs in Contract Management Division.

COMPLETE

ORGANIZATIONAL OPERATIONS & SYSTEMS

Strategy IV.4

Intra-Organizational Communication: Provide electronic transmission of information throughout the Department.

Objective

IV.4.1 By January 2012, all application-related forms will be available on-line.

COMPLETE

IV.4.2 By December 2011, establish retention guidelines for different types of documents.

COMPLETE

IV.4.3 By June 2012, develop and implement an E-Mail management program that promotes effective and efficient use of E-Mail at all staff levels.

COMPLETE

Strategy IV.5

Informational Networks: Establish a single portal that links the Department to federal, State and local data sources.

IV.5.1 By December 2013, establish a portal governance committee to evaluate the layout, navigation and contents of all DPSS portals to ensure links are current, consistent with Department standards, and provide pertinent information on DPSS programs and policies.

COMPLETE

IV.5.2 By June 2012, implement a Social Media plan which may include, among various options, the use of Twitter and/or Facebook to communicate with staff, participants and the public.

Maximize the use of leading edge technologies to improve outcomes.

Strategy V.1

E-Government: Develop and implement technologies compatible with the future eligibility determination system to provide access to our programs and services by allowing customers to apply for assistance and receive answers to their case related questions over the phone and/or on-line (via the Web/Internet), where applicable and permitted by law.

Objective

V.1.1 By December 2011, develop a web-based application available to customers to reduce applicant traffic and walk-ins at District offices by 10%.

COMPLETE

V.1.2 By December 2011, reduce paperwork by creating e-signatures for applicants and customers for all programs. **COMPLETE**

Strategy V.2

Business Intelligence (BI): Develop and implement technologies and tools that provide key Department performance data to our executives and managers, as well as crucial operational data to our staff and supervisors serving customers.

V.2.1 By December 2010, develop expert DPSSMART users across all bureaus, so that all divisions can fully realize the benefits of the data warehouse.

COMPLETE

V.2.2 June 2011, ensure that 70% of all official statistical reports produced by the department are available in DPSSMART.

COMPLETE

V.2.3 By June 2010, all managers, administrative support staff, and line supervisors have access to DPSSMART.

Strategy V.3

LEADER/GEARS: Develop and implement technologies to improve how our eligibility and case management systems (i.e., LEADER, GEARS, GROW, etc.) share information, and increase their accessibility from inside and outside the Department, compatible with the future eligibility determination system.

Objective

- **V.3.1** By December 2011, develop and implement a website to access information and upload verification.
 - **COMPLETE**
- **V.3.2** By June 2011, expand LEADER programming to automatically assign cases based on case type and case counts.

COMPLETE

V.3.3 By June 2011, develop and implement a plan to enhance the quality and uniformity of case comments on LEADER.

COMPLETE

V.3.4 By June 2013, produce 50% of all NOAs and forms in all threshold languages on LEADER.

COMPLETE

- **V.3.5** By December 2013, explore the possibility of adding a LEADER profile which would allow certain eligibility staff access to the Case Management Information and Payrolling System (CMIPS), via LEADER, to review IHSS provider payroll records.
 - **COMPLETE**

Strategy V.4

Web-Based On-Line Advanced Systems: Develop, implement and migrate all Department applications to web-based systems, making them easily accessible by authorized staff from the Internet Explorer (IE) browser.

- **V.4.1** By June 2012, establish and implement a web-based system for generating time sheets.
 - COMPLETE

Objective

V.4.2 By June 2013, establish an interface with CMIPS II to make provider hours and payment information readily available through an enhanced website and interactive voice response system.

ADDED AS A NEW OBJECTIVE IN THE 2014-2016 STRATEGIC PLAN

- **V.4.3** By June 2012, develop a web-based information center that incorporates a "search" option for CW, FS, MC, CAPI, and GR to allow all Eligibility Supervisors, QC Monitors, HSA Is, and Program Analysts to input questions and get step-by-step answers/instructions. **COMPLETE**
- **V.4.4** By December 2010, improve the DPSS Portal search function by simplifying access to program and DPSS staff contact information, statistical data, and DPSS forms. **COMPLETE**
- **V.4.5** By June 2010, provide users with a search engine function for LEADER build notes and procedures to find current specific modifications and enhancements. **COMPLETE**
- **V.4.6** By June 2011, in collaboration with the Auditor-Controller, and the Information Technology Division, and subject to County approval of on-line (electronic) invoicing, completely develop the CSBG on-line invoicing system, and fully implement the system, superseding the current paper-based system. **COMPLETE**
- **V.4.7** By June 2012, in collaboration with the Auditor-Controller, and the Information Technology Division, and subject to County approval of on-line (electronic) invoicing, develop a pilot system to expand application of the CSBG on-line invoicing system to other program contracts.

CONTINUE IN 2014 OUTSIDE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

V.4.8 By June 2011, develop/integrate systems that will safeguard the integrity of the Department's financial operations and make data available to district offices and account managers to assist them in managing the Department's finances.

Strategy V.5

Enterprise Architecture and Service-Oriented Architecture:

Develop and implement a common set of functionality and appearance for all applications, making them easier to use and requiring less training for staff.

Objective

V.5.1 By June 2010, create a departmental framework for applications development to provide a standard look and feel and common set of functions for custom applications.

COMPLETE

V.5.2 By June 2010, consolidate and migrate Oracle Application, Database, Oracle Internet Directory and Service Oriented Architecture Servers to the ISD data center.

COMPLETE

V.5.3 By June 2010, develop and implement a standardized set of departmental telephone messages to be played when customers are placed on hold.

COMPLETE

Strategy V.6

Enterprise Wide Communication: Provide all staff with E-mail, and other related tools for storing and sharing information, such as meeting agendas, minutes, discussion topics, decisions, project schedules, etc., to enhance communications across the Department.

V.6.1 By June 2011, 20% of inter and intradepartmental meetings that would require travel are conducted using online technology which may include video teleconferencing, WebExing, and/or conference calling.

COMPLETE

Objective V.6.2	By June 2012, convert to an on-line system for submitting routine paperwork (e.g., Daily Absence Reports, PA-158-1s, timesheets, mileage claims) and assisting line staff in completing required monthly/daily reports. ADDED AS A NEW OBJECTIVE IN THE 2014-2016 STRATEGIC PLAN
V.6.3	By June 2011, ensure all eligibility forms are accessible to EW staff through the LEADER Client Correspondence Screen. CANCELLED
V.6.4	By December 2010, ensure that all staff who need regular access to LEADER can do so at their workstations. COMPLETE
V.6.5	By December 2010, ensure that all staff who need a computer, have access to one. COMPLETE
V.6.6	By December 2011, establish electronic signature for internal documents, such as Administrative Directives and Manual Letters to expedite the approval process. COMBINED WITH OBJECTIVE V.6.2
V.6.7	By July 2012, establish a comprehensive automated appointment system for eligibility programs to include an automated appointment scheduling and reminder system. COMPLETE
V.6.8	By December 2011, expand "Employee Help Line" services by implementing an automated response system that includes voice prompts to properly route calls/inquiries from departmental employees and web applications. COMPLETE
V.6.9	By June 2012, expand the DPSS HRD website so employees can access personal information (e.g., vacation/sick hours accrued; test results, performance evaluations, health benefits). CANCELLED

Strategy V.7

Customer Service Center (CSC) Expansion: Expand the CSC to provide live customer service representatives and automated self-service features to all County customers for all applicable Department programs and services.

Objective

V.7.1 By December 2010, develop and implement a customer-friendly website that allows customers to:

- (a) view qualifying guidelines and frequently asked questions;
- (b) access limited case information, such as status, QR7 deadlines;
- (c) download required forms and letters;
- (d) receive correspondence, such as NOAs; and
- (e) handle minor transactions.

COMPLETE

V.7.2 By June 2011, expand the Customer Service Center to maximize its current location and add at least one additional CSC site, to support at least 10 additional local district offices.

COMPLETE

V.7.3 By December 2010, enhance the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system by providing additional case information to increase customer usage of the Self-Service feature; and add an Outbound Calling feature to increase participation.

COMPLETE

V.7.4 By June 2011, complete a Business Process Re-engineering Study for District Offices based on the changes in district functions tied to the implementation of the CSC.

COMPLETE

V.7.5 By June 2013, implement the Customer Service Center for all offices. **COMPLETE**